U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Gold King Mine Spill - Region 6

Meeting of Federal, State and Local Partners – August 9, 2015

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region VI

Subject: POLREP #3
Gold King Mine Spill - Region 6

Various New Mexico locations, NM
Latitude: 36.8374600 Longitude: -107.9916800

From: Ronnie Crossland, Region 6 Regional Incident Commander (RIC)
Date: 8/10/2015
Reporting Period: 8/9/2015 0700 – 8/9/2015 1900

1. Introduction

1.1 Description of Threat

Region 8 reported approximately three million gallons of mine waste water was released into Cement Creek and the Animas River. The primary environmental concern is the pulse of contaminated water containing sediment and metals flowing as an orange-colored discharge downstream through Durango, Colorado, and into New Mexico and Utah.

1.2 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

Water sampling is ongoing (analytical results are pending), and field pH levels and other water quality parameters are being monitored.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

EPA collected surface water samples on August 9, 2015 at nine locations in New Mexico along the Animas River and San Juan River. Basic water chemistry parameters were recorded including the surface water pH. The surface water pH on 9 August 2015 ranged from 7.18 to 8.01. The State of New Mexico state has specified a pH range of 6.6 to 9.0 for the Animas River and San Juan River as part of their state water quality standards. All the sample locations on 9 August 2015 had pH levels within the pH range specified by the State of New Mexico.

Preliminary lab data has been received on the 2 samples taken by Region 8 in New Mexico on August 6 and the 4 samples taken by Region 6 on the 7th. All of these samples were collected prior to the impacted water arriving in the area. Preliminary results indicate no exceedances for Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs, drinking water standards), recreation, and acute or chronic effects to aquatic life.

Region 8 took part in a public meeting last evening in Durango, Colorado. The Region 6 Public Information Officer embedded in the Joint Information Center (JIC) as well as the two OSCs in the field attended this meeting.

The water staff has developed a strategy for field sampling of private water wells in conjunction with the State of New Mexico.

Bottled water is being provided by the fire department to primarily the homeless. Homeowners who need drinking water can take containers to the fire department and have them filled.

Crop irrigation requirements are in good shape currently, however this may become an issue with expected higher temperatures.

EPA will begin sampling of private wells near the River will be limited to: Heavy Metals, pH, and conductivity, no coliforms. Region 6 will prioritize wells closest to the river and at depths less than 100 feet. The lab will be couriering sample bottles to and from Farmington. EPA is sending 11 additional contractors to help with sampling.

EPA Region 6 is coordinating with San Juan County Emergency Management to identify and address alternative water supply needs for agriculture and livestock. Water is being delivered to ranchers by the San Juan County Fire Department at the present. EPA plans to transition into providing this service. EPA has activated the ERRS contractor to initiate sourcing bulk and individual water supply alternatives. ERRS will begin this alternative water supply with livestock on August 10.

2.3 Finance Section

Daily Cost Estimates Report

Funding Source	EPA Expended Payroll	EPA Expended Travel	Contract Costs	TOTAL Expended	Est. Burn Rate
EPA	**$24,000.00**	**$6,600.00**	**$33,000.00**	**$63,600.00**	**$29,400.00**

3. Participating Entities

US EPA
NMED
NM Department of Health
NM Office of the State Engineer
NM Department of Game and Fish

4. Personnel

Gold King Mine Blowout 2015	
Group	**Number**
Region 6 EPA @ REOC	14
Region 6 Contractors @ REOC	3
Region 6 EPA in Field (R6)	6
Region 6 Contractors in Field	9